

Driving terrorist safe havens out of eastern and southern Afghanistan is crucial, but not if al-Qaida and Taliban militants continue to find sanctuary in the remote border regions of west Pakistan. The threat these transplanted terrorists pose has become even more real over the last 6 months as the world watched Taliban militants creep closer to Pakistani nuclear facilities.

We must support the Pakistan Government and its newly aggressive military action to take out the terrorists threatening their country and Afghanistan.

The horrors of nuclear-armed terrorists would be put at risk and put at risk freedom-loving people everywhere. This is not a risk we or the world can take. The stakes of turning our backs on this conflict could not be higher. America ignored the fact that Afghanistan became one giant camp for terrorists in the 1990s, and thousands of Americans died on 9/11 as a result. And thousands of our brave troops have died in defense of our Nation since then.

We face a similar threat today, 8 years after 9/11. Al-Qaida has shifted their terrorist sanctuaries from Afghanistan to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, FATA, of Pakistan. The Taliban, the same people who sheltered Osama bin Laden and defied U.S. demands to hand him over, now fight efforts by the international community to bring stability to Afghanistan.

Our U.S. withdrawal, in whole or in part, from Afghanistan now would be a tacit yet unambiguous approval for the return of Taliban control over Afghanistan. In turn, this would lead to the establishment of safe havens for many of the world's most violent and feared terrorists. American abandonment of Afghanistan now could possibly hand over the keys to a nuclear-armed kingdom to violence-loving terrorists.

I returned this past August from Denmark and Greece, two relatively small countries but steadfast allies in their resolve to support the NATO mission and stabilize Afghanistan. Declaring defeat in Afghanistan today would signal to our allies that Americans no longer have the resolve to defeat terrorists. Declaring defeat in Afghanistan today would signal to our allies that simply by waiting us out, violent extremists can triumph over the combined military and economic might of the international community. Finally, declaring defeat in Afghanistan today would signal to the families of those who died on September 11 and the troops who have fought since then in the years since in service to their country that their loved ones died in vain. These are not signals our great Nation should ever send.

Instead, we must declare unequivocally our courage, resolve, and patience to provide needed resources and more troops to allow the smart power strategy of General McChrystal to succeed. This alone is the signal America should send.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

9/11 REMEMBRANCE

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, before I make some comments about our departed colleague, Senator Kennedy, I must comment on the gravity of the remembrance of this day in history several years ago.

There is not a person living who was old enough at the time on that fateful day in 2001 who does not remember exactly where they were when the tragedy occurred and this Nation was struck by terrorists, struck from within.

Our Nation had grown up in its history of always having been protected in the homeland, protected by geography, with two big oceans that kept us insulated from attack from without. Then suddenly we were shocked into the realization that we could be attacked on our own homeland. Of course, what America has done in reaction to that, in perfecting our defenses, in increasing our intelligence apparatus, so that we get the information before the terrorists can carry out their dastardly deeds.

That has been significant in the protection of this Nation and its people. Of course, we remember exactly that fateful day, every one of us. This Senator was only a few yards from this Chamber on the west front of this U.S. Capitol building in a meeting with leadership. We were aware that the Twin Towers had been struck with the first and second planes. Somehow we wanted to continue our meeting, even though our minds couldn't stay on the subject matter of the day, when someone burst in the room—I believe it is S-219—and said the Pentagon had been hit. We leapt to the window overlooking the Mall in the direction of the Pentagon and could see the black smoke rising.

It is interesting the reactions you have at a time such as that. My wife and I had, a few days before, moved into an apartment overlooking the southwest corner of the Pentagon. It is called Pentagon Row. Of course, I leapt to a telephone to try to get a message to her to get out of the apartment and get into the basement garage. Being unsuccessful to reach her, I came back into the room everyone had deserted and out into the hallway, seeing the hallway crowded with people going down the stairs and hearing the Capitol policeman at the bottom of the stairs saying: Get out of the building, run, run, get out of the building. Of course, the report had come in that the fourth airplane was inbound for Washington.

It was a day that brought Senator ROCKEFELLER and me together, as he beckoned to me to get into his car and, as we drove away from the Capitol complex, scrambling with our cell phones, trying to get office staff to tell them to get out of the buildings and

get to a location where they could inform us away from the Capitol complex. Senator ROCKEFELLER and I wound through streets in Washington until we got to a location where we could wait to try to get additional information. Since then, of course, our Capitol police force and the Department of Homeland Security have come through with procedures and instructions that are much more definitive than we had on that day.

I will never forget on that day when Senator ROCKEFELLER and I decided we needed to move away from the location we were—we wanted to get to a place we could get news; we went to his home—hearing not a sound in the sky since all air traffic had been ceased on order of the Secretary of Transportation, but then hearing that silent sky being pierced by the sound of F-15s overflying the Capitol. It was a day that we not only can remember but that we can take great lessons and instruction from to prepare not to let it happen again, one we remember today and those people who sacrificed, those people who were the victims.

REMEMBERING SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, it is equally a solemn subject on which I rise to remember our friend and colleague Ted Kennedy who died at the young age of 77. I say "young age" because it was another one of our colleagues, Senator John Glenn, who flew on a 10-day spaceflight at age 77. Today, 11 years later, he still looks as young as he looked back then. So 77 is way too young an age for cancer to take our friend Ted Kennedy.

From the funeral and the remembrances, we know that he was the youngest of nine children. He had four brothers. He was born in 1932 and elected to the Senate in 1962. He spent 46 years in the Senate, longer than all but two of our colleagues. He loved this institution, and he loved his fellow Senators. Of course, so many pieces of major legislation affecting the well-being of the American people if they don't have his name on it, certainly bear his fingerprints. Many of those pieces of legislation reflect the work of his pen.

He fought tirelessly for the sick, the poor, the disabled, the children, the old. He was the driving force behind efforts to guarantee rights to the disabled, to provide family and medical leave, and to ensure a fair minimum wage. He also remembered individuals, both his colleagues, his staff, and his constituents. He was the first person to call during hard times. Why do you think that yesterday, our most esteemed colleague, Senator BYRD, in his bent-over, physically disabled condition now, was wheeled to this floor in his wheelchair, and his voice rose to the occasion in memorializing his friend. I remember Senator BYRD telling me how thoughtful Senator Kennedy was on a major birthday in his

80s, when Senator Kennedy had sent him the requisite number of roses.

Of course, no matter what your political persuasion, you could see Ted Kennedy as an example of public service. He devoted his entire life to public service. He did so despite his easy financial condition. He did so despite numerous opportunities elsewhere. He did so despite seeing his three brothers sacrifice their lives in service to their country.

I want to quote from our colleague Ted Kennedy, a quote from April 2006. He said:

The defining aspect of our country is opportunity—the hope that you can do better, that your children can do better. But you need an even playing field. To do that, you can't be sick and in school. You've got to have health care. You've got to have an economy working to give people a chance to get ahead. It is not guaranteed. But you do have to have an opportunity. Our country is big enough and strong enough and wealthy enough to give that kind of opportunity to everybody. That's what I work on every day.

What an example for all of us. There is something else I wish to say about our colleague, because much has been made of his flaws. But who among us does not have flaws? Maybe Senator Kennedy realized so much his flaws that he decided despite those, he was going to do the best he could do for his fellow humankind. So he dedicated his life to the poor, the sick, the young and old, and the disabled. He fought against discrimination of all types. Indeed, he stood up for the least among us. Who cannot admire that, in being a champion for the least among us.

Godspeed, Ted Kennedy.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I join my colleagues today in remembering the amazing life of Senator Edward Kennedy, a man beloved in the Senate and beloved in America.

My thoughts and prayers are with his wife Vicki, his children, and his whole family.

Like so many others, I consider myself lucky to have worked with him. He was more than a colleague, he was a mentor and a friend.

I remember that he used to send me a message, "The lantern is lit," when we would have late night votes. It was his way of beckoning me and a small group of Senators—Senator SCHUMER, Senator CANTWELL and maybe one or two others—to his office in the Capitol where he would regale us with stories as only an Irishman would.

Ted Kennedy's wit and stories, his passion for a cause and his country and his love for the Senate made me want to go to work every day. He never gave up and he had a fiery zest for the legislative battles that was always tempered by a bipartisan pragmatism.

I remember last year when we were working on the Medicare improvements bill, which was absolutely critical to Medicare recipients across the country.

Seniors were counting on us to pass this bill, but we were just one vote short of the 60 we needed. But HARRY

REID knew how to find that last vote. The afternoon of the vote, the doors of the Senate swung open and in walked Senator Kennedy.

I will always remember watching him walk onto the Senate floor with then-Senator Obama and his son PATRICK on either side of him. Every single Senator had made their way to the floor, and the gallery was full. Applause erupted as he walked out, even though it is against the Senate rules. Each of us gave him a tearful hug and kiss as he made his way to cast his vote.

His very presence seemed to open the floodgates. Suddenly, a bill that was about to fail by one vote passed by nine as Republicans who had spent weeks blocking the bill suddenly switched their votes after Senator Kennedy.

His presence was so persuasive that day because his colleagues knew these were issues he believed in deeply, and had spent his life fighting for. He never gave up on the good fight.

Ted Kennedy, with his booming voice, gave a voice to the voiceless and stood up for those who had no one standing with them. As he said, "We are all part of the American family and we have a responsibility to help members of that family when they are in need."

Ted Kennedy did more than just speak these words, he lived them. Day in and day out on the Senate floor, he fought for justice and equality and opportunity for all Americans.

I will give you just one example, after we tragically lost our friend and colleague Paul Wellstone, Senator Kennedy picked up his torch and helped get the Mental Health Parity Act through the Senate.

His many achievements will be etched in the history books and his legacy will live on in the hundreds of laws that bear his name.

But Ted Kennedy will be remembered for more than just his legislation, he will be remembered for his heart and his humor and his zest for life.

On a snowy winter day in Washington, DC, one year, one of my friends took his family to go to sledding and who should he see? Senator Kennedy and Senator DODD across the way, sledding down by the National Cathedral.

This is the Ted Kennedy I will remember, a man who made the most of life, a man who loved his friends and his family and a man who worked each and every day to make this country stronger.

While he will no longer walk onto the Senate floor, he will remain with us through the lessons he taught us and the memories he blessed us with.

Today, let us honor his life by picking up his torch and continuing to fight the good fights, while also respecting those on the other side of us.

Let us fulfill his dream of "an America where we can all contend freely and vigorously, but where we will treasure and guard those standards of civility which alone make this nation safe for both democracy and diversity."

Ted Kennedy loved this country and was willing to work with anyone and find common ground in order to open the doors of opportunity for all Americans.

He carried the weight of history on his shoulders, but rose up to become the lion of the Senate and one of the greatest legislators in the our country's history.

Although he is no longer with us, he will continue to inspire us.

Mrs. MURRAY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, September 11 is a day of the year that has special resonance for all Americans and always should. Earlier this week I was honored to stand with some of the family members of those who died 8 years ago this morning on flight 93. They were here to mark the establishment of a memorial to those brave men and women who gave their lives that day over a field in Pennsylvania and who in the process may very well have saved the lives of many of us here. Their role in history will now be forever memorialized here in the Capitol, ensuring that we never forget their sacrifice nor the sacrifice of the thousands of other innocent men and women who were taken from us on that terrible day. This is just as it should be, because as I said during the ceremony earlier this week, there are some moments in the life of a nation that are worth remembering. There are others that are impossible to forget. September 11, 2001, is both.

All of us who lived through that day know this to be true. We know that with each passing year, the day itself may become more distant in time but the memories do not. And yet it is important we mark that day each year with sadness for those whom we lost; with solemn pride in the heroes of 9/11; and with renewed determination to confront terrorism wherever it is found. The memory of the fallen impels us.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, like all Americans, I will never forget where I was on September 11, 2001, and I will never forget the way our country responded. In the face of great tragedy,